

IN THE CLAIMS

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A document management method which uses a plurality of document schemas to manage a document retrieval request, the document schemas defining a structure of document contents, each document schema including a plurality of attributes, the method comprising:

assigning a schema identifier to each of the plurality of document schemas by generating a global unique identifier value every time a schema name of a new document schema is input; and

assigning an attribute identifier to each of the plurality of attributes of one of the plurality of document schemas by generating another global unique identifier value;

determining whether the attributes of a changed document schema include an attribute ID that is common to a non-changed document schema, through comparison between the attribute identifiers of both the changed document schema and the non-changed document schema; and

replacing the attributes of the non-changed document schema with the attributes of the changed document schema having the common attribute identifiers.

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Claim 2 (Canceled).

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Claim~~3~~ (Original): The document management method according to claim 1, wherein the plurality of document schemas are contained in a document schema file, the document schema file being stored into a first document management system and containing the schema identifier for each of the document schemas and the attribute identifier for each of the attributes of one of the document schemas, and the document schema file capable of being stored into a second document management system.

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Claim ~~4~~ (Previously Presented): The document management method according to claim 1, wherein, in assigning the schema identifier, a global unique identifier value is received as a new schema identifier from an external system via a network and the new schema identifier is assigned to one of the plurality of document schemas.

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Claim ~~5~~ (Previously Presented): The document management method according to claim 1, wherein, when a query condition is input, the document management method carries out a query conversion process for the input query condition, the query conversion process comprising:

reading a schema identifier, which corresponds to one of schema names in the query condition, from a related one of the plurality of document schemas; and

replacing each of the schema names in the query condition with the schema identifier.

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Claim ~~6~~ (Previously Presented): The document management method according to claim 1 wherein, when a query condition is input, the document management method carries out a query conversion process for the input query condition, the query conversion process comprising:

determining whether one of attribute names included in the query condition is a common attribute shared by the plurality of document schemas; and

replacing the attribute name in the query condition with a string of a corresponding field of a document attribute management table when said one of the attribute names is the common attribute.

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Claim ~~7~~ (Currently Amended): A computer readable storage medium storing program code instructions for causing a processor to execute a document management method, the document management method using a plurality of document schemas to manage a document retrieval request, the document schemas defining a structure of document contents, each document schema including a plurality of attributes, comprising:

first program code means for causing the processor to assign a schema identifier to each of the plurality of document schemas by generating a global unique identifier value every time a schema name of a new document schema is input; and

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second program code means for causing the processor to assign an attribute identifier to each of the plurality of attributes of one of the plurality of document schemas by generating another global unique identifier value;

third program code means for causing the processor to determine whether the attributes of a changed document schema include an attribute ID that is common to a non-changed document schema, through comparison between the attribute identifiers of both the changed document schema and the non-changed document schema; and

fourth program code means for causing the processor to replace the attributes of the non-changed document schema with the attributes of the changed document schema having the common attribute identifiers.

Claim 8 (Canceled).

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Claim ~~9~~ (Original): The computer readable storage medium according to claim ~~7~~,
wherein the plurality of document schemas are contained in a document schema file, the document schema file being stored into a first document management system and containing the schema identifier for each of the document schemas and the attribute identifier for each of

the attributes of one of the document schemas, and the document schema file capable of being stored into a second document management system.

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Claim ~~10~~ (Original): The computer readable storage medium according to claim ~~7~~,
wherein the first program code means is configured to cause the processor to receive a global
unique identifier value as a new schema identifier from an external system via a network and
to assign the new schema identifier to one of the plurality of document schemas.

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Claim ~~11~~ (Currently Amended): A document management apparatus comprising:
a schema identifier assigning device configured to assign a schema identifier to each
of a plurality of document schemas by generating a global unique identifier value every time
a schema name of a new document schema is input, the plurality of document schemas
defining a structure of document contents to manage a document retrieval request, each of the
plurality of document schemas including a plurality of attributes; and

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an attribute identifier assigning device configured to assign to each of the plurality of
attributes of one of the plurality of document schemas by generating another global unique
identifier value;

a control configured to determine whether the attributes of a changed document
schema include an attribute ID that is common to a non-changed document schema, through
comparison between the attribute identifiers of both the changed document schema and the
non-changed document schema, and to replace the attributes of the non-changed document
schema with the attributes of the changed document schema having the common attribute
identifiers.

¹⁰
Claim ~~12~~ (Currently Amended): A computer readable media for controlling a computer to perform:

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assigning a schema identifier to each of a plurality of document schemas by generating a global unique identifier value every time a schema name of a new document schema is input, the plurality of document schemas defining a structure of document contents to manage a document retrieval request, each of the plurality of document schemas including a plurality of attributes; and

assigning an attribute identifier to each of the plurality of attributes of one of the plurality of document schemas by generating another global unique identifier value;

causing the processor to determine whether the attributes of a changed document schema include an attribute ID that is common to a non-changed document schema, through comparison between the attribute identifiers of both the changed document schema and the non-changed document schema; and

causing the processor to replace the attributes of the non-changed document schema with the attributes of the changed document schema having the common attribute identifiers.
